

# **Justice Carlson receives Chief Justice Award**

July 16, 2012

Mississippi Supreme Court Presiding Justice George C. Carlson Jr. of Batesville is the recipient of the 2012 Chief Justice Award.

Mississippi Supreme Court Chief Justice Bill Waller Jr. announced the award on Friday, July 13, at the Mississippi Bar Convention in Sandestin, Fla. The annual award recognizes individuals whose work improves the judicial system.

Presiding Justice Carlson was honored for his 30 years of public service, including 11 years on the Supreme Court and 19 years as 17<sup>th</sup> District Circuit Judge, and for his leadership. Presiding Justice Carlson chairs the Supreme Court Rules Committee on Civil Practice and Procedure and the Mississippi Model Jury Instructions Commission. He became a presiding justice and a member of the court's Executive Committee in 2009.

Chief Justice Waller said that Presiding Justice Carlson "believes that there is no higher calling than that of public service, and has devoted 30 years of his life to serving the people of the state of Mississippi through his work on the bench. You see that commitment to service in the tone of his opinions, in the conduct of his personal life, and in his association with other justices, attorney and employees. He is a tireless worker who often is the first in the office and the last to leave. Yet he always makes the time to stay in touch with his home district, such as swearing in local public officials."

Chief Justice Waller, who is the only member of the Supreme Court with longer service than Presiding Justice Carlson, said that his friend and colleague's leadership and assistance in the administrative and rule-making matters of the court have been invaluable. "He has performed tremendous service far above and beyond the duties of deciding cases," Chief Justice Waller said, noting that Justice Carlson has authored more than 300 majority opinions for the court.

After receiving the Chief Justice Award, Justice Carlson stated, "This indeed is an occasion I will always remember. To have my wife, our children and their spouses, and our three grandchildren in attendance made the day especially memorable for me. I am honored that Chief Justice Waller felt that I was deserving of such a prestigious award. Also, to have Whit Waide, one of my former law clerks and now a professor at Mississippi State University, in attendance to make remarks on my behalf was very meaningful as well."

It was Presiding Justice Carlson's second time to receive the Chief Justice Award. He shared the award with several other recipients in 2003.

Presiding Justice Carlson was appointed to a vacancy on the Supreme Court on Nov. 1, 2001. He has announced that he will retire in January 2013, at the end of his term.

He previously served for 19 years as a circuit judge for the 17<sup>th</sup> Circuit District of DeSoto, Panola, Tallahatchie, Tate and Yalobusha counties. He served as vice-chair of the Mississippi Circuit Judges Conference in 1998-1999, and chair of the Conference in 1999-2000.

Justice Carlson served as a member on the Governor's Criminal Justice Task Force in 1991, and as a member of the Commission on the Courts in the 21st Century 1992-1993.

He served as a member of the Professionalism Committee of the Mississippi Bar 1998-1999, and as a member of the Law School Professionalism Program Task Force 1998-1999.

Justice Carlson is a member and past president of the Panola County Bar Association, and a member and past president of the William C. Keady American Inns of Court. He is a Fellow of the Mississippi Bar Foundation. He is a member of the American Bar Association, the American Judges Association, the Mississippi Bar, and the Lamar Order of the University of Mississippi School of Law.

Justice Carlson is a 1964 graduate of South Panola High School. Outside the court, he is probably best known as the radio play-by-play announcer for the South Panola Tigers.

He earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Mississippi State University in 1969, and a law degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law in 1972. Justice Carlson graduated from the National Judicial College, University of Nevada, Reno, in October 1982.

He is an elder in the Batesville Presbyterian Church. He is married to Jane Ivy Russel Carlson. They have two children and three grandchildren.

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